

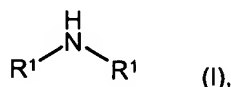
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as shown in the attached sheets.

1. (original) A process for preparing a symmetrical secondary amine by reaction of a primary amine in the presence of hydrogen and a catalyst whose preparation has involved precipitation of catalytically active components onto monoclinic, tetragonal or cubic zirconium dioxide.
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2. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~the preceding claim~~, wherein the catalytically active components precipitated are salts of a metal selected from transition groups VIII and IB of the Periodic Table.
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3. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~the preceding claim~~, wherein the metal salts are basic salts which are sparingly soluble or insoluble in water.
4. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 2 ~~either of the two preceding claims~~,
15 wherein the salts are oxides, hydrated oxides, hydroxides, carbonates and/or hydrogen-carbonates.
5. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 2 ~~any of claims 2 to 4~~, wherein the metal is selected from the group consisting of Fe, Co, Ni, Ru, Rh, Pd, Pt and Cu.
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6. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 2 ~~any of claims 2 to 4~~, wherein the metal is selected from the group consisting of Cu, Ni and Co.
7. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein
25 the catalytically active composition of the catalyst before treatment with hydrogen comprises from 20 to 85% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of zirconium, calculated as ZrO_2 , from 1 to 30% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of copper, calculated as CuO , and from 14 to 70% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of nickel, calculated as NiO .
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8. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein
the catalytically active composition of the catalyst before treatment with hydrogen comprises from 20 to 65% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of zirconium, calculated as ZrO_2 , from 1 to 30% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of copper, calculated as CuO , from 15 to 50% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of nickel, calculated as NiO , and from 15 to 50% by weight of oxygen-containing compounds of cobalt, calculated as CoO .
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9. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 5 ~~any of claims 5 to 8~~, wherein the molar ratio of nickel to copper is greater than 1.
10. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the monoclinic, tetragonal or cubic zirconium dioxide contains one or more oxides of metals of transition groups IIIB or main group IIA of the Periodic Table.
11. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at from 50 to 250°C.
12. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~, wherein the reaction is carried out at pressures of from 5 to 350 bar in the gas/liquid phase or in the gas phase.
13. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of the preceding claims~~ for preparing a symmetrical secondary amine of the formula I



where

- R^1 is alkyl such as C_{1-200} -alkyl, cycloalkyl such as C_{3-12} -cycloalkyl, hydroxyalkyl such as C_{1-20} -hydroxyalkyl, aminoalkyl such as C_{1-20} -aminoalkyl, hydroxyalkylaminoalkyl such as C_{2-20} -hydroxyalkylaminoalkyl, alkoxyalkyl such as C_{2-30} -alkoxyalkyl, dialkylaminoalkyl such as C_{3-30} -dialkylaminoalkyl, alkylaminoalkyl such as C_{2-30} -alkylaminoalkyl, aryl, heteroaryl, aralkyl such as C_{7-20} -aralkyl, heteroarylalkyl such as C_{4-20} -heteroarylalkyl, alkylaryl such as C_{7-20} -alkylaryl, alkylheteroaryl such as C_{4-20} -alkylheteroaryl,
- or $\text{R}^3\text{R}^4\text{N}-\text{A}-$, where $\text{A} = \text{C}_{1-6}$ -alkylene or $-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{O}-(\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-\text{O})_n-\text{CH}_2-\text{CH}_2-$ (where $n = 0, 1$ or 2) and $\text{R}^3, \text{R}^4 = \text{C}_{1-4}$ -alkyl or together with the N-atom to which they are bound form a piperidine or morpholine ring,

or the two radicals R^1 together form $-(\text{CH}_2)_l-\text{CH}_2-\text{X}-(\text{CH}_2)_m-$, where

3

X is CH_2 , CHR^5 , oxygen (O), sulfur (S) or NR^5 ,

R^5 is hydrogen (H), alkyl such as C_{1-4} -alkyl, alkylphenyl such as C_{7-40} -alkylphenyl,

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l, m are each an integer from 1 to 4,

by reaction of a corresponding primary amine of the formula II or IIa



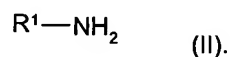
14. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1 to 12~~ for preparing a symmetrical secondary amine of the formula I



where

R^1 is C_{3-10} -dialkylaminoalkyl such as 3-(N,N-dimethylamino)propyl,

20 by reaction of a corresponding primary amine of the formula II



15. (currently amended) ~~The use of a~~ A catalyst as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~
25 for preparing a symmetrical secondary amine by reaction of a primary amine in the presence of hydrogen.